members of the New Hampshire legislature as also law makers in the United States Congress and other state legislatures of the true facts relating to Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan's sponsorpship of cross-border terrorism. There have been no reports of similar moves in other state legislatures and the United States Congress.

U.S. request to provide airspace facilities

3641. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the U.S. Government had approached India for providing Indian airspace and other facilities to the U.S. and British forces during war against Iraq;

(b) if so, whether Government have not accepted the request;

(c) how many countries have offered assistance to U.S. to fight against Iraq;

(d) whether Government have started any initiatives to stop this war;

(e) if so, whether India have approached all the Non-Aligned nations to intervene and urge the U.S. Government to follow the United Nations advice on these issues; and

(f) if so, to what extent Government have succeeded in its role?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The United States has published the names of 48 countries as its coalition partners in the war in Iraq.

(d) Government pursued diplomatic engagement with the United States and other countries based on its principled position that while Iraq Must comply with its obligations under UN Security Council resolutions, all efforts should be made to resolve the Iraq Issue peacefully within the frame work of the United Nations. Although not a member of the UN Security Council, India expressed its position in all Open Meetings of the Security Council, including the meeting on 26 March 2003.

(e) India had consulted other non-aligned nations, including during the NAM Summit in Kuala Lumpur in February 2003.

(f) The efforts of a large number of countries, including permanent members of UN Security Council, to avert a war did not succeed.

Job security to Gulf Returnees

3642. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:
SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indians in Iraq and Kuwait at the outbreak of war on March 20, the number who have left for home and those still left behind;

(b) the steps Government are contemplating for the due return of the Indians to resume their jobs in the Gulf States from where they left for India since and prior to the outbreak of the war; and

(c) Government's response to the media reports that not all, who left in the wake of war, may be welcome to return?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) to (c) There were approximately 3,50,000 Indians in Kuwait at the outbreak of war on 20 March. Kuwait airport has remained open to normal commercial flights throughout the duration of war. Air India and Indian Airlines carried 5705 passengers from Kuwait to India between 19–31 March, 2003. The Government of Kuwait has clarified that an expatriate can return to Kuwait within 6 months of his departure provided his residence visa remains valid. There were reportedly 19 Indian nationals in Iraq at the outbreak of the war, all of whom chose to stay on in Iraq. There are no reports of Indian nationals leaving other Gulf countries on account of outbreak of war.

Indo-China Relations

3643. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether China has sent a message to India that it wants to built strong economic and business ties with India; and